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The Rev. Charles Graves exhibited an ancient gold ornament, belonging to the Earl of Leitrim, of which the following description is given in Vallancey's Collectanea, Vol. V., p. 90 :

" Mr. Burton Conyngham has now in his possession one of those double cupped patera, described and engraved in the 13th Number of the Collectanea. The instrument is of gold, was found in the county of Mayo, and weighs about six guineas. On the outside of one cup is an Ogham inscription; on the outside of the other an inscription in the Phœnician or Estrangelo character.—See Pl. III.,—where the cups are reversed to show the inscription. The Phœnician word is composed of the *Ain*, *Lamed*, *Tau*, *Aleph*, i. e. נְלָמֶד, i. e. *Alta* or *Oltá*, signifying an holocaust. This confirms my former opinion, that these instruments were used in sacrifices. The Ogham characters are *UOSER*, *Uoser*, *Osir*, or *Usar*, the Sun, the principal deity of the pagan Irish. The names *Aesar*, *Aosar*, frequently occur in ancient Irish MSS., which are always translated God."

Mr. Graves stated that, whilst he recognised the gold ornament itself as being a genuine and a very fine specimen of the ancient manillæ,* of which many are preserved in the Museum of the Academy, he was forced, after a careful examination of it, to pronounce the inscription to be a forgery of comparatively recent date. For this conclusion he assigned the following reasons :

Faint tracings of all the characters scratched upon the surface, as if to serve as a pattern to be copied by the engraver, are still quite visible. There can hardly be a doubt but that casual attrition, and the action of the atmosphere or earth for a thousand years or more, would have effaced such marks.

The inscribed characters have a sharpness which is not to be seen in ancient work, even though executed in gold. All the original devices which appear on ancient gold articles

* See Sir William Betham's papers on Ring Money, in the Transactions of the Academy, vol. xvii.

possess a peculiar mellowness, from the action of the causes just alluded to.

These characters, moreover, have plainly been cut with a graver, such as is employed at the present day. But no traces appear, on genuine antique Irish ornaments, of the use of such an instrument. The lines and patterns on them seem to have been laboriously scratched with a point rather than cut in. The conclusiveness of these reasons is maintained by the judgment of Mr. West, the eminent jeweller, to whom Mr. Graves applied for his opinion on the subject. So many valuable relics of antiquity have passed through his hands, at different times, that his opinion on a point of this kind ought to be nearly decisive.

Mr. Graves further remarked, that the characters said by Vallancey to be “Phœnician or Estrangelo,” are neither the one nor the other; and, what is more, in the scanty remains of Phœnician literature, which have been collected by Gesenius and Hammaker, we meet with no such word as *Olta*, meaning a holocaust. As for the word *Aesar*, which Vallancey professes to find, though somewhat deformed, in the Ogham inscription, Mr. Graves asserts that it does not frequently occur in ancient Irish MSS.; on the contrary, it is so rare that, with the aid of the most accomplished Irish scholars, Mr. Graves has not yet succeeded in finding a single instance of its use, except as it occurs in O'Reilly's and Shaw's Dictionaries. It certainly is an Etruscan word, meaning God, and it may have found its way into Irish glossaries, though not belonging to the Irish language.

In order to show how unsafe a guide Vallancey is in what relates to Ogham writing, or, it might be added, in any matter of Irish archæology or philology, Mr. Graves referred to a passage which occurs in the tract on Oghams, preserved in the Book of Ballymote. This passage stands thus in the original (*Book of Ballymote*, f. 168):

“Aéair oígam Ogma. Ma-
éair oígam láim no scian Ogma.
Iré ro imorro in céadna ní ro
scríobád éri oígam .i.” &c.

“The father of Ogham was Ogma; the mother of Ogham was the hand or knife of Ogma. This indeed was the first thing that was written through Ogham, viz.,” &c.

The meaning, as is quite plain from the context, being, that Ogma was the inventor of the Ogham character, and that the instrument with which he first executed it was his own hand or knife. Vallancey, in his *Essay on the Ogham Writing of the Ancient Irish (Collectanea, vol. v. p. 79)*, gives the following reading and version of the same words :

“Atair Ogaim, Ogma; ma-
thar Ogaim, Lám, no Scian
Ogma. Is sè Sóm in céadna :
sè ro scribtar tri Ogam,” &c.

“The father of Ogum was Ogma, his mother's name was Lám, or Scian Ogma (the helpmate of Ogum). The same is called Sóm: he wrote his own name in three Oghams,” &c.

Here it will be seen that Vallancey has introduced two imaginary personages, Som and Lam, neither of whom were thought of by the Irish writer; and he expends a vast quantity of irrelevant erudition in making out this Som to be a Theban (Egyptian) Hercules, and Lam to be the daughter of Belus and Libya. “This helpmate” [of Ogum] he adds, “was named Lám, or Lamia, which signifies a horrid, dreadful monster; hence must have arisen the Grecian story of Hercules having begotten Scythes, the progenitor of the Scythians, on the body of a monster, half woman, half serpent. A fable which gained ground wherever the Scythians went,—from Scythia to Tartary, China, and Japan.”

It ought to be added that, by tampering with two other passages in a like way, Vallancey has elsewhere educed the name of his Theban Som (*Collectanea, vol. v. pp. 63, 69*).

Mr. Graves referred to another instance in which, by a

perverse ingenuity, additional darkness has been thrown upon the obscure subject of Ogham writing.

Mr. Beauford contributed to the first volume of the Transactions of the Academy a paper in which he describes twelve coins, on which he thinks he finds legends, in Ogham, Roman, and Runic characters intermixed ; and he gives readings of these, exhibiting various Irish names of persons and places.* Any person, the least conversant with numismatics, will at once recognise these coins as being all of them Hiberno-Danish. By the kindness of Dr. Aquilla Smith, Mr. Graves was enabled to exhibit to the Academy one of the actual coins figured by Mr. Beauford, viz., that marked No. 7 in the plate illustrating his paper.

This coin, now in Dr. Smith's collection, is appropriated by Mr. Lindsay, who has studied this class of coins with most attention, to Sihtric IV., King of Dublin, A. D. 1034. It may, however, belong to Sihtric III., A. D. 989.

Mr. Beauford's description of the coin is as follows :—

“ Round the head, on the obverse, is the following inscription in Latin, Runic, and Ogham Croabh characters :

u m e a r c r e a d o n

or,

U mearc re a don, for *O More Re I dun*.

On the reverse, in one of the quarters of the cross, is a hand, with the following inscription in Latin, Runic, and Ogham Croabh characters :

mac g h e a l a c h o f u t l a

or,

Mac Ghealach O Futla, for *Magh Ghealach O Fodhla*. ”

Subjoined is a figure of the coin in question, executed from

* Still more absurd misrepresentations respecting Ogham characters and writing may be seen in a paper by the same author, called *Druidism Revived*, which is inserted in the second volume of Vallancey's Collectanea.

a drawing by Dr. Smith, and also a fac simile of the (enlarged) figure given in Mr. Beauford's plate :

Mr. Graves concluded by apologising for having occupied the time of the Academy in the discussion of matters of so little intrinsic importance ; but pleaded the necessity of breaking down the remnant of authority which still gives to the assertions of Vallancey and his adherents the power of leading students in Irish history and antiquities astray.

Practices like those now commented on once brought contempt upon Irish archaeology ; and philologists for a long while shrank from entering upon the rich field of inquiry which the study of the Celtic language and literature presents, through fear of sharing in the ill repute of former labourers. But these feelings are now happily dying away ; and it is to be hoped that the Academy, encouraging such pursuits, when carried on in a scientific spirit, and vigilantly checking all attempts to mislead, will have the satisfaction of seeing permanently established amongst its members a sound and numerous school of antiquaries and scholars, really conversant with the language and antiquities of this country, and therefore able successfully to prosecute that work of illustrating its history, which a few, in recent times, have so well begun.

Sir William Betham exhibited two specimens of gold ring money, found at Chiusi and Perugia, in Italy. He also presented to the Academy an ancient brass basin, found in the King's County; and two antique metallic mirrors, found in Italy.

Sir William R. Hamilton stated and illustrated a theorem of anthodographic (or anthodic) isochronism, namely, that if two circular anthodes, having a common chord, which passes through or tends towards a common centre of force, be both cut perpendicularly by any third circle, the times of anthodically describing the intercepted arcs will be equal:—the *anthode* of a planet being the circular locus of the extremities of its vectors of slowness, or of straight lines representing, in length and in direction, the reciprocals of its velocities, and drawn from a common origin.

This theorem is intimately connected with the analogous theorem respecting hodographic isochronism (or synchronism), which was communicated to the Academy by Sir William Hamilton, in a note read at the Meeting in last March. He had been led to perceive that former theorem by combining the principles of his first paper on a General Method in Dynamics, published in the second part of the Philosophical Transactions for 1834, with those of his communication of last December, since published in the Proceedings of the Academy, respecting the Law of the Circular Hodograph. This *Hodograph* was, for a planet or comet, the circular locus of the extremities of its *vectors of velocity*, as the Anthode is the locus of the extremities of the vectors of slowness; so that the rectangular coordinates of the Hodograph are x' , y' , z' , if

$$x' = \frac{dx}{dt}, \quad y' = \frac{dy}{dt}, \quad z' = \frac{dz}{dt};$$